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STATE FOR SCA/CEN, SCA/PPD, DRL, S/P

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR KDEM KPAO TI

SUBJECT: TIT-FOR-TAT OP-ED SLAMS AMBASSADOR'S SUPPORTING TAJIK SOVEREIGNTY

REF: DUSHANBE 1185

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¶1. (U) SUMMARY: The steady stream of (probably) Russian-influenced black propaganda against the United States continues in the Tajik press. A recent article alleges U.S. NGOs foment "color revolutions," the United States has done nothing for Tajikistan's economic development, the purpose of the U.S. - built Pyanzh River Bridge is to harm Russian interests, and U.S. foreign policy is founded on global control of energy resources. Foreign Minister Nazarov described the article to the Ambassador as disgusting. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) On July 13, "Biznis i politika" published a front-page reaction to the Ambassador's June 22 op-ed, "Sovereign States Make Their Own Decisions," entitled "Some Reflections at the Main Entrance to the New Building of the U.S. Embassy."

¶3. (U) The article opens sarcastically that the Ambassador Hoagland "once again declares that the United States is a noble knight of democracy and progress who cares about the well being of others, in this case Central Asian countries, without any efforts to pursue its own interests." It then analyzes the goals and methods the United States uses to gain political influence in Central Asia and Tajikistan in particular.

¶4. (U) It notes that "the entire Tajik society," including mass media, the political elite, the financial and banking sectors, as well as students and young people are targets of U.S. political influence in Tajikistan, through which Washington

promotes its "democratic and political reforms." The article alleges the U.S. Embassy uses the NGO sector to foment and support "color revolutions" in post-Soviet countries.

¶ 5. The article alleges the United States has made no real contributions to the economic development of Tajikistan. As an example of meaningless assistance, it says the U.S. sent shipping containers left over from its construction to a border post to be used for totally inappropriate living quarters for the border guards and customs officials.

¶ 6. (U) The article raises suspicion over the rushed construction of the U.S.-funded bridge across the Pyanzh River to Afghanistan, asking why the bridge is important given the continuing instability in Afghanistan and the increase in drug trafficking across the Tajik-Afghan border. The author asserts that the reason behind the bridge is to gradually decrease Russian influence in the region and establish control over the uranium resources of the Tian Shan Mountains, and potential gas and oil supply routes. The article presumes that the real reason behind U.S. efforts to export freedom around the world is to gain control over the world's energy and oil resources.

¶ 7. (U) The article concludes archly that "the United States has clearly identified its geo-strategic interests in Central Asia." The author suggests that Ambassador Hoagland's assertion the "our goal is to support the independence and sovereignty of the states of Central Asia" is disingenuous and is merely a smokescreen hiding

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the United States' real intentions.

¶ 8. (U) COMMENT. FM Nazarov first brought this article to our attention on July 17. When it appeared, Tajik authorities tried to track down the by-line author, "but no such journalist exists." Calling the article disgusting, Nazarov said it's clearly from "certain sources" who want to harm the U.S.-Tajikistan relationship. We seldom respond to the endless flow of "black propaganda" in the Tajik media. However, we note as soon as we place an Ambassador's op-ed or interview, we're sure to see a rejoinder. As junk articles go, this one was not especially damaging because it contained almost nothing new, except the allegation that the United States intends to monopolize Tajikistan's uranium deposits.

END COMMENT.
HOAGLAND